**Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims:**

1-5.    (Cancelled)

6.      (Currently Amended)  ~~The method of claim  1~~ A method for dynamic access decision information retrieval, the method comprising:

        receiving a request for access decision information from an application, wherein the request identifies a plurality of entitlement information items for an entity and an identity of the entity;

        determining a given entitlement information provider for each one of the plurality of entitlement information items to form a plurality of entitlement information providers, wherein the plurality of entitlement information providers are determined based on the plurality of entitlement information items identified in the request that is received;

        retrieving a given entitlement information item from each one of the plurality of entitlement information providers, wherein the step of retrieving the given entitlement information item from each one of the plurality of entitlement information providers includes generating a retrieval client for each one of the plurality of entitlement information providers to form a plurality of retrieval clients, wherein each one of the retrieval clients retrieves entitlement information from a given one of the plurality of entitlement information providers that it is associated with;

        forming a response, wherein the response includes the one or more entitlement information items; and

        returning the response to the application, wherein the application is an access manager that is operatively coupled to a web server that receives entity requests from the entity across a network, wherein the access manager includes a rules engine that is called by the access manager to evaluate rules based on credentials and entitlements of the entity in order to make informed entity-specific entitlement decisions regarding a service requested by the entity, wherein each

one of the retrieval clients generates a protocol module to form a plurality of protocol modules, and wherein each one of the protocol modules retrieves entitlement information from a given one of the entitlement information providers that it is associated with using a provider specific protocol that is compatible with the given one of the entitlement information providers.

7.      (Cancelled)

8.      (Previously Presented)  The method of claim  6, further comprising responsive to receiving the request, starting a session for the entity in a dynamic information retrieval server data processing system, wherein the session generates the plurality of retrieval clients which retrieve the entitlement information and return the retrieved entitlement information to the session.

9.      (Cancelled)

10.     (Previously Presented)  The method of claim 8, wherein the entity is a user that contacts the web server to obtain  the service therefrom.

11-15.  (Cancelled)

16.     (Currently Amended)  ~~The  dynamic access decision information apparatus of claim 11~~ A dynamic access decision information apparatus for providing dynamic access decision information retrieval, the apparatus comprising:
        receipt means for receiving a request for access decision information from an application, wherein the request identifies a plurality of entitlement information items for an entity and an identity of the entity;
        determination means for determining a given entitlement information provider for each one of the plurality of entitlement information items to form a plurality of entitlement information providers, wherein the plurality of entitlement information providers are determined based on the plurality of entitlement information items identified in the request that is received;

retrieval means for retrieving a given entitlement information item from each one of the plurality of entitlement information providers, wherein the step of retrieving the given entitlement information item from each one of the plurality of entitlement information providers includes generating a retrieval client executable process within the dynamic access decision information apparatus for each one of the plurality of entitlement information providers to form a plurality of retrieval clients, wherein each one of the retrieval clients retrieves entitlement information from a given one of the plurality of entitlement information providers that it is associated with;

forming means for forming a response, wherein the response includes the one or more entitlement information items; and

returning means for returning the response to the application, wherein the application is an access manager that is operatively coupled to a web server that receives entity requests from the entity across a network, wherein the access manager includes a rules engine that is called by the access manager to evaluate rules based on credentials and entitlements of the entity in order to make informed entity-specific decisions regarding a service requested by the entity, wherein each one of the retrieval clients generates a protocol module to form a plurality of protocol modules, and wherein each one of the protocol modules retrieves entitlement information from a given one of the entitlement information providers that it is associated with using a provider specific protocol that is compatible with the given one of the entitlement information providers.

17.    (Cancelled)

18.    (Previously Presented)  The dynamic access decision information apparatus of claim 16, further comprising responsive to receiving the request, starting a session for the entity in a dynamic information retrieval server data processing system, wherein the session generates the plurality of retrieval clients which retrieve the entitlement information and return the retrieved entitlement information to the session.

19-22. (Cancelled)

23.    (Currently Amended)  ~~The recordable medium of claim  20~~ A computer  recordable medium having a computer program product tangibly embodied therein, wherein the computer program product is operable in a data processing system for providing dynamic access decision information retrieval, the computer program product comprising:

   instructions for receiving a request for access decision information from an application, wherein the request identifies  a plurality of entitlement information items for an entity and an identity of the entity;

   instructions for determining a given entitlement information provider for each one of the plurality of entitlement information items to form a plurality of entitlement information providers, wherein the plurality of entitlement information providers are determined based on the plurality of entitlement information items identified in the request that is received;

   instructions for retrieving a given entitlement information item from each one of the plurality of entitlement information providers, wherein the  instructions for retrieving the given entitlement information item from each one of the plurality of entitlement information providers includes instructions for generating a retrieval client executable process within the data processing for each one of the plurality of entitlement information providers to form a plurality of retrieval clients, wherein each one of the retrieval clients retrieves entitlement information from a given one of the plurality of entitlement information providers that it is associated with;

   instructions for forming a response, wherein the response includes the one or more entitlement information items; and

   instructions for returning the response to the application, wherein the application is an access manager that is operatively coupled to a web server that receives entity requests from the entity across a network, wherein the access manager includes a rules engine that is called by the access manager to evaluate rules based on credentials and entitlements of the entity in order to make informed entity-specific decisions regarding a service requested by the entity, wherein each one of the retrieval clients generates a protocol module to form a plurality of protocol modules, and wherein each one of the protocol modules retrieves entitlement information from a given one of the entitlement information providers that it is associated with using a provider specific protocol that is compatible with the given one of the entitlement information providers.


24-25. (Cancelled)